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ABSTRACT

Various problems in the education field require the attention and efforts of the North Carolina Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (NCACTE). Public and professional criticism of education at all levels, shifts in educational policy at the national and state levels, and new perceptions of the goals and role of education have produced an unsettling but challenging situation for the association. There are several issues, critical to the continued improvement of education, that must be faced by NCACTE. The first is the development of a sound conceptual base for teacher education programs that promotes higher quality in teacher education graduates. The second and third issues are related and deal with changing the focus of staff development efforts from individual faculty improvement to program improvement, thereby gaining control of the professional education of teachers. The fourth issue concerns the organizational framework and funding of NCACTE in terms of long range objectives. NCACTE should adopt an active leadership role in addressing the new priorities in education such as life long education, educational technology, and program evaluation. Recommendations to enhance NCACTE's leadership potential involve a name change, changing the financial structure and priorities, and creation of an executive director position. Also suggested are increased cooperative efforts with the state department of public instuction and other educational agencies and the creation of an institute for research in education. (FG)

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PROFESSIONAL ISSUES

DAVID H. REILLY, PRESIDENT

NORTH CAROLINA ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES

FOR TEACHER EDUCATION

DECEMBER 4, 1981

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SP 019 446

I am very honored to have this opportunity to address you as President of the North Carolina Association of Colleges for Teacher Education. It has been an honor to have been entrusted with the responsibility of this position and I thank you for the opportunity for allowing me to serve you and education in this capacity.

What I would like to discuss briefly is the current scene of education as I perceive it, the efforts that NCACTE has made this year, the future issues and activities that I believe NCACTE must address, and finally, I would like to present seven recommendations for your consideration for addressing these issues.

It is clear that education has suffered over the recent years. This has occurred at practically all levels of educational endeavor and, to a significant extent, higher education has been held primarily responsible for what are perceived as the failures of the elementary and secondary schools. I am not going to site all of the criticisms which have been levied upon education. You know them as well as I do. I would note however, the effect and results of these criticisms. We have a serious morale problem among the teaching force at all levels, we have seen a significant decline in resource allocation, we have an increasingly tenured teaching force, a lack of new positions and funds to develop staff development programs, and programs which are in many cases becoming rapidly outdated. We have lost the confidence of the public and as a result are being forced to move to a business accountability model which is totally inappropriate for an educational service delivery system. We are, in fact, in a serious and critical time for education and face continuing difficulties in reshaping education as a viable force and voice for assisting in the development of the future directions of our society.

It would be a mistake however, to believe that all of our problems are due to others. We in higher education must assume responsibility for ourselves and for those efforts and programs which are not viable and which do not measure up to acceptable standards of academic quality and rigor. I will have somewhat more to say about this particular problem in a few minutes, but I would also like to note, for the record, that education has achieved much under very adverse conditions with a paucity of re-

sources and with various publics which have been inconsistent in their statement of objectives that education should and must achieve.

In sum, educators today are in danger of being consumed by feelings of pessimism about their ability to affect their own future. This raises the twin spectres of passivity and/or militarism. We must guard against both, do a better job of describing our accomplishments and assume increased responsibility for monitoring our standards.

We must also comprehend completely the very major change in philosophy which is taking place at the National and State levels. We must understand completely the implications this change is having and will continue to have for some time in the future on the ways we will have to conduct our business. Whether we agree or disagree with the economic philosophy espoused by President Reagan, which is only one part of a much larger change in the philosophy of the role of the Federal Government and State responsibilities, we must, for our own and our students sake, understand what it means for the kinds of programs and activities we can afford to engage in. In a very brief analogy President Reagan's philosophy might be characterized as similar to that of a 1700 homesteader. They believed in being self-sufficient, to reject aid from others, and to learn to live with what they themselves could produce. To a significant degree this is what we are being told from the Federal Government and unless we understand that we will not receive significant resources and funding from Washington and further, that the support we can expect from the State level is uncertain, then we will have trouble defining what we can do for ourselves in terms of becoming more efficient with the resources we currently have on hand.

The matter of the State's willingness to meet our needs is complicated by a number of factors. First of all, the General Assembly hears from any number of educational associations and organizations, each of which speaks from a different philosophical base and conceptional framework with different objectives and methods.
Secondly, higher education has, within this broader context of educational diversity, spoken with various objectives in mind and even at the level of NCACTE, we have not

been able to establish a consistent and coherent philosophy of education with an agreed upon conceptual basis for our programs and the standards by which such programs should and will be measured. In addition, we have those who have attempted to create dissension and to characterize our efforts as self-serving and of little value to the larger and more critical needs and objectives of the State's educational endeavors.

I am making these statements, not to add to your feelings of pessimism but rather to describe what I perceive to be the reality of the situation at the National and State level. To ignore them is foolish and self-defeating; to understand them only increases our capacity to develop effective strategies and mechanisms for coping with them and for developing a sound and professional means of continuing to develop our educational programs.

There is one other change process which is gathering increased momentum within our society which must be understood in terms of its implication for our education programs. This is the need to understand that as the social fabric of our world changes, and dramatically so, so must the goals, roles and programs of education. This relationship is perhaps best expressed in the changed curriculum question which in the past was, "What should schools teach children and youth?" to the new curriculum question of today and tomorrow, "What learning opportunities should be provided for citizens?" Cremin (1975) has urged that a comprehensive approach be followed in developing new educational policies and pursuits. He stated:

> "to think comprehensively about education, we must consider policies with respect to the wide variety of institutions that educate; not only schools and colleges, but libraries, museums, day-care centers, radio and television stations, offices, factories and farms. To be concerned solely with schools in the educational world which we are living in today is to have a kind of fortress mentality in contending with a very fluid and dynamic situation".

Cremin's point is that the format for education takes in a much broader array of institutions and agencies today than it did in the past. It is totally consistent with a logical extension of the two assumptions from the Enlightenment which have held fast over the years as to the rationale for free schooling. These are (1) that literate and discerning citizens are essential to a representative democracy, and (2) that education leads to self-improvement. The only change from the time of the Enlightenment is that education now is a life-long pursuit and that it takes place in agencies and with formats other than that of the K-12 schools.

These four factors (changing requirements for education, philosophical change at the National level, local political battles at the State level and new roles and goals for education) must form the basis on which NCACTE continues to develop its efforts and programs in the future. In the next section of my remarks I would like to briefly address four activities which have been begun by NCACTE which I feel are critical to future continued improvement and development of education.

The first issue deals with the development of a conceptual base for teacher education. This is the first and most critical topic for all of us to address, and if I can presume to read your minds, you are each saying that we already have a conceptual base for teacher education at our institution. I would say that I don't think so. We have too much diversity in the capabilities of our graduates, we have too much diversity in the quality of our faculty, and we are far too lenient in the kinds of programs we develop to support whatever conceptual basis and framework we have for our teacher education programs. We must develop a conceptual base supported by a sound philosophy, assure that our programs and courses are consistent with the conceptual framework, the philosophy of our program, and the objectives we seek to achieve. Further, we must demonstrate the adequacies of our faculty and resources to support such programs; otherwise, we are in serious jeopardy of being controlled by others. The development of an agreed-upon conceptual framework for teacher education is vital and necessary in order to make the argument that we can be accountable for our own behavior and the quality of our graduates.

The second major issue which we have begun to address is that of staff development. We have talked for many years about staff development and sabbaticals and released time as common expectations on the part of our faculties. We must develop a new approach to staff development: faculty development in institutes of higher education as well as local educational agencies must be controlled and directed towards specified objectives which will result in program improvement. No longer can we afford or allow staff development for faculty which is solely for the edification and interest building of individual faculty members. Resources allocated for faculty development must be directed towards the enhancement of our programs. This is so for two reasons: (1) we no longer have the resources to allow everyone to do their own thing, and (2) our programs which are most in need of improvement will only be achieved by the control of resources in order to achieve such. It is unrealistic to expect that individual faculty will say that they are inhibiting the improvement of programs because they are out-of-date. There must be an agreed upon approach to the allocation of resources for program, not faculty, improvement. Of course, if faculty improvement occurs along the way we certainly would not argue. Such a plan, of course, requires faculty agreement, cooperation and support.

The third issue which we have begun to address this year is that of controlling our own destiny by controlling our own programs; I would like to indicate how this is related to the previous two issues. Unless we are able to develop a sound and presentable conceptual base for our programs, to indicate how our program delivery systems are consistent with this conceptual framework, that the resources are adequate to their achievement and that we can specify the quality of our graduates, we are not going to be able to convince the public that we should have responsibility for accounting for our own programs. Critical to being able to achieve such is the continued improvement and development of our programs through the use of faculty development focused on program improvement. Only then would we be able to say with confidence and persuasiveness that we have assumed responsibility for our programs; we can honestly state their quality and challenge others to demonstrate otherwise. We are all aware of programs and faculty members at each of

our institutions which would not measure up to an honest evaluation. We cannot allow this to continue if we expect to ever achieve control of our own destiny and achieve the future we desire. Otherwise, we deserve the future we are drifting into at the control of others. Program control rests on the achievement of the objectives of the first two issues.

The fourth current issue that I would like to bring to your attention (which we have begun to discuss but have not made any major strides towards achieving) is the appropriate organization and funding of NCACTE. In order to achieve the objectives identified above and of those which I'll describe as future issues, we must question seriously whether the current organization of NCACTE is the most viable. I think it is clear that the funding base we have is totally inadequate for anything other than a social organization. If we want to be a professional organization and be perceived as such, then we must present a professional organization - appropriately funded - to achieve our objectives. An institutional fee of $50.00 will not achieve this goal. Our organization must include provision for at least a half-time Executive Director housed in Raleigh who can lobby for our efforts, be pro-active, provide a long-term, stable base for NCACTE's efforts in the political arena, and be a visible and viable means for NCACTE's efforts and desires to achieve and maintain a leadership role in the educational endeavors of the state.

I must also state that the current organizational framework within NCACTE is probably not conducive to the achievement of long term objectives. A presidential term of one year is totally inadequate in order for the incumbent president to develop and implement a set of programs and activities. A two year term would more nearly allow for the achievement of such. It would also provide sufficient time for a president-elect to understand the mechanisms and operations of NCACTE and provide for a reasonable length of time for he or she to begin to develop his or her own sets of plans and program objectives. We must also make provision for insuring that the best people for NCACTE are put into leadership positions.

I would like in the time remaining to briefly raise a number of future issues which I feel are vital for NCACTE's consideration and then to provide some brief recommendations about how NCACTE might orient itself and address in a viable manner some of the concerns which I have raised.

The first issue that NCACTE must begin to address is the criteria by which we will measure the strength and quality of our programs. Such will not be measured by the number of students produced, the number of pages of a faculty's vita or the successful number of accreditation visits we can endure successfully. Rather, the criteria of education and thus for NCACTE must be the amount of positive effect our graduates are having on improving the quality of life of the communities in which they work. Other criteria pale by significance. We exist to produce graduates who will positively enhance the lives of those children and adults with which they come in contact. We must, because it is professionally responsible to do so, learn how to measure such effect and use such feedback to further improve the quality of programs.

The second issue which we must face is that the nature of education has changed and therefore so must NCACTE and the programs that it represents. We must begin now to develop life span education. No longer can we consider education as existing only as K through 12. Education is a life-long necessity. We must develop programs which will provide learning which is critical, necessary and desirable for persons of all ages. Such programs must be based on developmental principles appropriate for various age levels, and we must begin to develop the models of instructional delivery which are appropriate to various age levels. It is quite conceivable, and most likely quite probable, that the type of instructional delivery for middle-aged career changing individuals is quite different from that which is appropriate for elementary or secondary students. We must begin to tie together in a more comprehensible manner developmental principles and models of instruction based on such principles.

We must seek to address the increasing role of technology and tele-communications as it effects both teaching and learning. From the extropolation of the growth of the micro-computer over the past few years into the future, one can reasonable expect that

by the year 2000, computers with many hundred K will be the size of cigarette packs. Not only will such computers make available many more times the amount of instantaneous information available than is currently possible with today's computers but, coupled with advances in the understanding of the physiology of learning, they will also increase the rate of learning to an unforeseen level. These understandings of brain function will, I suspect, revolutionize our knowledge of how learning takes place and therefore have an immediate and significant impact on our curriculum development, models of instruction, and format of delivery. It is critical to keep in mind such advances will probably take place within the next 19 years. We must begin now to develop the capacities and capabilities to not only take advantage of such advances, but to be a leader in how they will effect learning in our society.

We must also consider the development of new consortia and alliances with those agencies and organizations which have an impact on education. We can no longer allow splinter and political organizations to divert us from the real mission of education which is the better shaping of society for our children. Unless we begin such alliances and consortia among ourselves, as well as with others, we will be missing a critical and important mechanism for advancing the cause of education.

We must develop new and viable means of exerting leadership in research and development. As a profession, education probably spends less, perhaps because it has less, on new and innovative research and development of ideas which are focused on the improvement of teaching and learning. We cannot permit the Golden Fleece Award to be even considered in the research which we attempt. It is also probable that our research efforts can best take place through consortium and cooperative ventures between our institutions and those of the local schools. We must become the leader in research in education.

The final issue which we must address in the very near future is that of the evaluation of our programs. No longer can we allow others to be the sole voice in determining our program approval procedures, criteria and outcomes. We must asert vigorous leadership in the evaluation of our programs and be ready to say to those programs which do

not meet our criteria, improve or get out of the business. We can no longer allow substandard programs to exist.

NCACTE has been noted for being a conservative group and a reactive group. My purpose in identifying the issues that I've mentioned has been to bring to your attention those issues and needs which I feel must be addressed. However, only if NCACTE moves from a conservative posture into a more proactive stance will it begin to achieve its potential. NCACTE is a viable force in North Carolina education. We have begun to attract the attention of many of the constituencies which effect both our well being as well as that of the children we serve. We have not nearly reached our potential. There is much more that we can achieve and there is no question that we have the intellectual and creative resources to do so. We also have the opportunity to assert our leadership in shaping the paths to the future that we all desire our children and grandchildren to have. The opportunities today for education to move in new directions, with new force, and at the same time improve dramatically the efforts which we are beginning have never been so grand, have never been so open. A leadership vaccum exists in education at the National and State levels. There is no reason why NCACTE should not fill this vaccum and help the State achieve its full potential. I would like to offer to you a number of recommendations which are a result of the issues I have raised and are hopefully, directed toward assisting NCACTE to reach its potential and exert a viable leadership in shaping North Carolina's educational feature.

Recommendations

1. I propose that NCACTE change its name from the North Carolina Association of Colleges for Teacher Education to the North Carolina Association of Colleges for Professional Education. This is more than just a change of a word. It represents a change in our focus and a realization that we train professional educators for a variety of settings and age levels.
2. I recommend that NCACTE give serious consideration to changing its financial structure and seek outside help in finding ways to finance a half-time Executive Director to be housed in Raleigh and have as part of his/her duties those of lobbying and public relations.

3. I recommend that NCACTE exert leadership in cooperative efforts with the State Department of Public Instruction to institute a new form of program evaluation. I recommend that such evaluation not be on an institutional basis but should be by discipline, i.e., review all science education programs at all institutions for one year, review all elementary education programs the next year. This would provide a total state-wide effort geared to evaluation of particular programs with a goal in mind of providing a state-wide focus for identifying those programs which are truly exemplary, which ones are in need of particular kinds of improvements, which programs have the resources necessary to achieve certain objectives, and which programs should be discontinued. It would also help to remove the stigma that our program evaluations when carried out by higher education representatives are nothing more than cursory in nature.

4. I recommend that NCACTE give serious consideration to improving its financial situation through consideration of altering its affiliation with AACTE and the use of such funds that might be provided through change in such affiliation. I also recommend that a special committee be established to seek sources of outside funding to assist NCACTE to develop a sounder financial base. Private sources should be considered as well as such other agencies as the Fund for the Improvement of Post-Secondary Education.

5. I recommend that NCACTE seek new collaborative relationships with local educational agencies, the State Education Agency, and the State Board of Education. It should be a policy of NCACTE to have a representative (the Executive Director would be fine) to attend every meeting of the State Board of Education. We must seek to promote an image which is positive, responsive and helpful.

6. I must recommend that NCACTE exert vigorous effort in developing a leadership goal in research and education. I recommend that funds be sought to establish a North Carolina Institute for Research in Education to function as a component part of NCACTE. Such an institute could serve as a staff development agency for faculty,

for local educational agencies, for providing research and services to the State, and for policy analyses to the State Board of Education, and other agencies interested in education.

These recommendations are offered to the membership for their consideration with the hope that they will assist in the continued development of NCACTE. I am sure that each of you can offer many more to the list. I therefore propose that NCACTE develop a procedure for developing a long range mission plan and the establishment of priorities for the achievement of those objectives that it wishes to undertake on a long term basis.

I wish to thank you for the opportunity to serve you as President of NCACTE this year. It has been a very rewarding experience. The successes that I believe we have achieved are due to the efforts of many fine people; I look forward to being able to serve you in additional capacities in the future.

Cremin, L. A. "Public Education and the Education of the Public." Teachers College Record, 77 (1) September, 1975, 1-12.